U.S. Department of Education 2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

A Non-Public School - 13PV101

School Type (Public Schools):	Charter	Title 1	Magnet	Choice	
Name of Principal: Mrs. Patrio	cia Keenaghar	<u>n</u>			
Official School Name: Acade	my of Our La	<u>ıdy</u>			
•	180 Rodney S Glen Rock, N	<u>Street</u> IJ 07452-2826	į		
County: <u>Bergen</u>	State School	Code Number	*: <u>1760</u>		
Telephone: (201) 445-0622	E-mail: <u>prin</u>	cipal@acaden	nyofourlady.or	<u>g</u>	
Fax: (201) 445-8345	Web site/URI	L: www.acad	lemyofourlady	.org	
I have reviewed the informatio - Eligibility Certification), and				ity requiremen	ts on page 2 (Part I
				Date	
(Principal's Signature)					
Name of Superintendent*: Bro	ther Ralph Da	armento, F.S.C	C. Superinten	ident e-mail: <u>da</u>	rmenra@rcan.org
District Name: Archdiocese of	Newark Dis	strict Phone: (9	973) 497-4260		
I have reviewed the informatio - Eligibility Certification), and			ing the eligibil	ity requiremen	ts on page 2 (Part I
				Date	
(Superintendent's Signature)					
Name of School Board Preside	nt/Chairperso	on: <u>Ms. MaryL</u>	ee Gallagher		
I have reviewed the informatio - Eligibility Certification), and					ts on page 2 (Part I
				Date	
(School Board President's/Cha	irperson's Sig	gnature)			

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools (Aba.Kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

^{*}Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

- 1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
- 2. The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or its equivalent each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
- 3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
- 4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
- 5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
- 6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
- 7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
- 8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
- 9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
- 10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
- 11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

Questions 1 and 2 are for Public Schools only.

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SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

- 3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: <u>Suburban</u>
- 4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 14
- 5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	41	32	73
K	19	22	41
1	21	14	35
2	17	19	36
3	16	17	33
4	16	10	26
5	15	23	38
6	27	9	36
7	21	27	48
8	17	27	44
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
To	otal in App	lying School:	410

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:	0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
	2 % Asian
	2 % Black or African American
	7 % Hispanic or Latino
	0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
	87 % White
	2 % Two or more races
	100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2011-2012 school year: 3% This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	3
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	9
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	12
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	434
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.03
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	3

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school:	1%
Total number of ELL students in the school:	7
Number of non-English languages represented:	2
Specify non-English languages:	

The non-English Languages represented are Korean and Spanish.

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals:	2%
Total number of students who qualify:	10

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

The number above represents the results from the Income Survey letter sent home. Not all families participated in the survey.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 23%

Total number of students served: 94

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

0 Autism	0 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deafness	24 Other Health Impaired
0 Deaf-Blindness	15 Specific Learning Disability
0 Emotional Disturbance	55 Speech or Language Impairment
0 Hearing Impairment	Traumatic Brain Injury
0 Mental Retardation	0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0 Multiple Disabilities	0 Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Full-Time	Part-Time
Administrator(s)	1	1
Classroom teachers	21	1
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	2	5
Paraprofessionals	3	2
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	1	6
Total number	28	15

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school	19:1
divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1:	19:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools	14.	For	schools	ending	in grade	12	(high	schools):
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Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

Graduating class size:	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in vocational training	0%
Found employment	0%
Military service	0%
Other	0%
Total	<u></u> 0%

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

0	No
0	Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

Academy of Our Lady is a faith-filled Catholic school community dedicated to living Gospel values and serving others as a reflection of Jesus' love. The school is committed to the mission of educating students to become life-long learners through a rigorous curriculum guiding their spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and social growth. Each child is encouraged to develop to his or her fullest potential in family, church, school, country, and global communities.

Academy of Our Lady, located in Glen Rock, New Jersey, is a Catholic elementary school co-sponsored by Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Ridgewood and St. Catharine, Glen Rock. This Pre-Kindergarten through grade 8 school is part of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Newark and a member of the National Catholic Education Association. The community spirit engages priests, faculty, parents, and students through their sharing, learning, praying, and serving one another, the neighborhood, and the world. This vibrant community has deep roots with alumni faculty members and current students with generationslong connections to the school. The school receives support from the School Advisory Board, an active Home School Association, the Fathers' Guild, and the sponsoring parish communities.

Academy of Our Lady follows a tradition of Catholic education since opening in 1953 with 65 students as St. Catharine School. Founded by the Sisters of Charity, the school became Saint Catharine Interparochial School in 1990 when it merged with Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. The school received Middle States Association accreditation in 1994 and was re-accredited in 2004. At the request of the co-sponsoring pastors, the school name was changed to Academy of Our Lady in 1999.

The school's population draws from forty zip codes reflecting a diversity that is celebrated in many ways. The marvelous traditions that unite the community and foster school pride include liturgies, prayer services, Christmas pageant, International Day, carnivals, pool party, and Fun Fair.

The Academy recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children and views the relationship between parents and the school as a partnership. Parent organizations are a vital part of the school community. The Home School Association meets monthly and plans several activities for fun and fundraising. The Fathers' Guild lends a hand by sponsoring school-improvement projects and providing fellowship. The spirit of outreach fostered through service learning is evident in the actions of students, parents, faculty, and alumni who serve their communities through activities such as a fundraiser basketball game and spring planting at Van Saun Park.

The school's strength begins with a dedicated faculty partnered with supportive parents and involved pastors. Academic excellence is reflected in the students' accomplishments in various academic competitions. Students repeatedly place first, second, or third in competitions such as Scholastic Olympics, Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl and Cablevision's Hispanic Heritage Essay Contest. The strong foundation provided at the Academy contributes to students' success in high school and college including scholarship awards, honor society memberships, and leadership roles.

A majority of the faculty possess advanced degrees. Specialist instructors teach art, computer, library media, music, physical education, reading, and Spanish. Teachers view webinars, attend conferences, take college courses, pursue advanced degrees, and maintain membership in professional organizations. The teachers model a spirit of volunteerism through their involvement in activities that extend beyond their daily responsibilities, such as after school tutoring, committee work, and moderating clubs and after school activities.

The school's challenging curriculum meets and exceeds the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and Archdiocesan guidelines. Instruction is multi-faceted and responsive to student needs, incorporating methods based on multiple intelligences, cooperative learning, differentiated instruction, scientific inquiry, inclusion, and infusion of technology. Teachers use innovative methods to blend curriculum with service learning projects that reach communities locally, nationally, and globally. Through the efforts of the Fathers' Guild and Tech Committee, the Academy provides a learning environment equipped with a computer lab, interactive whiteboards, laptops, desktops, document cameras, and iPads to support the development of 21st century skills.

Student performance on national standardized tests exemplifies a high-achieving school. The Academy has a strong reputation in the community for an excellent educational environment. The school received the United States Commerce Association's Best of Glen Rock award in education for four consecutive years. The Honor Roll, Homework Heroes Breakfast, Star Student program, and awards won in art, band, service, essay, handwriting contests, and academic competitions all recognize students for achievement. Student leadership is developed through Student Council, Prayer Partners, and clubs. Faculty, parents, and independent providers moderate over thirty extracurricular clubs and sports teams in an effort to provide students with a well-rounded educational experience. The administration, faculty, parents, and students together form a strong learning community focused on excellence, spirituality, and service to others. This fusion allows Academy of Our Lady to provide a program that enables students to achieve, believe, and serve, and is worthy of Blue Ribbon recognition.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A. The Terra Nova Third Edition standardized tests are administered at Academy of Our Lady in early March every year according to the schedule established by the Archdiocese of Newark. These assessments, published by CTB/McGraw Hill, provide nationally normed data about student achievement in reading, language, math, science, and social studies. Students in grades 1, 2, 4, and 6 take the Complete Battery form of the Terra Nova, which consists solely of multiple choice items. Students in grades 3, 5, and 7 take the Multiple Assessment form of the test which includes constructed response as well as multiple choice items. The math section assesses student proficiency in computation, estimation, patterns, functions, number concepts, operations, measurement, geometry, algebra, data interpretation, and problem solving. Items on the reading section of the Terra Nova test assess student achievement in such areas as basic understanding, word meaning, analyzing text, and evaluating and extending meaning. Students in Grades 2-7 also complete the In View Test of Cognitive Skills which measures cognitive ability and is used by CTB to project a student's anticipated achievement on the Terra Nova test. Acceptable performance at Academy of Our Lady is based on each student's ability and performance on Terra Nova. Students are expected to meet or exceed the anticipated scores.

B. Academy of Our Lady's 2011-2012 Terra Nova scores in reading and math for each of the grades reported (grades 3-7) exceed the National Blue Ribbon cut scores by at least six points. Math achievement for grades 5 and 6, exceed the cut score by 13 points and 15 points respectively. Reading scores in grades 3, 4 and 6 each exceed the Blue Ribbon cut scores by 11 points.

With few exceptions, scores in reading and Math for the past five years have been in the above average range (76th - 99th percentile). A review of assessment scores shows that grade 7 scores are consistently above the 75th percentile in both reading and math. Although the 2012 scores for grade 7 are lower than the scores of the 2011 grade 7 group a careful review reveals that scores obtained by the Class of 2013 cohort (2012 Grade 7 group) are higher than the cohort's scores in the four preceding years. It should be noted that the 2012 grade 7 scores are aggregate scores inclusive of the Special Education subgroup which consisted of 10 students, as noted in the assessment data tables. The subgroup's mean reading score was 65 and their mean math score was 61.

Relatively low scores in math achievement in grade 4 in 2008-09 and 2009-10 led to the implementation of several new strategies. These include classes beginning with daily warm-ups and integration of technology-based programs, IXL and Education City, both at school and home. Additionally, the use of hands-on exploration and manipulatives develop a deeper understanding of concepts. The math journals expand students' verbal expression and math communication. In examining weaker performing classes, attention was paid to student needs using the Terra Nova Individual Student Profile report. Areas of weakness were identified and instruction modified to strengthen students mathematical skills and understanding of concepts. A math coach was hired to work with teachers to improve instruction in mathematics. A Math Empowerment teacher provides students with more individualized attention yielding an increase in math achievement in the targeted areas.

Student achievement scores for reading are consistently high with 2012 Terra Nova scores in the above average range. The lowest reading scores over the past 5 years are those obtained by the Class of 2013 cohort when they were in Grade 4 in 2008-2009 and in Grade 5 in 2009-2010. This cohort's scores show significant growth since 2008-2009 when they scored 68 in Grade 4 as compared to the cohort's score of 77 in Grade 7 in 2011-2012. This improvement in students' reading achievement can be attributed to an increase in reading time, including Drop Everything and Read, leveled assessment kits and use of vocabulary skill builders.

In reviewing the cohort scores the fourth grade was identified as an area requiring increased scrutiny to determine methods that will help maintain prior achievement levels as students' progress from the primary grades into the middle school. This is a focus for professional development and collaborative planning among teachers working with these students. Efforts are pursued to implement instructional strategies that are most effective for this age group.

The trend over the past five years reflects consistently high expectations for student performance. The student scores are used not only to gauge the individual needs of students, but also to evaluate the current program and to plan effective strategies for the continued development of the school community. The consistency of achievement and the evidence of effective planning stemming from the school's evaluation of results speak to the importance of the meaningful use of data in instructional improvement at Academy of Our Lady.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Academy of Our Lady considers life-long learning not just a goal for students, but also a goal for the staff, faculty, and administration. One of the most important tools in reaching this goal is the analysis of the Terra Nova, Third Edition assessment results. Analysis of assessment results enables Academy of Our Lady teachers to identify the needs of individual students and plan appropriate instructional activities. Assessment results are also used to track student progress to ensure continuous academic growth and to determine curriculum needs. The comparison of anticipated achievement to students' performance drives areas of instructional improvement. Close attention to areas where the anticipated scores are not met lead to instructional improvements. Interventions for students not meeting anticipated levels include collaboration among teachers, conferring with parents, and developing individualized plans for instruction and academic support.

Teachers examine Group Performance Reports and Group List Reports, as well as Individual Student Profiles. This examination takes place in a collaborative manner during a series of meetings held during the spring semester following the release of the reports and the Archdiocesan Assessment meeting attended by the principal and the testing coordinator. The faculty gathers as a whole and in grade level and subject area groupings to evaluate the results and to plan for the coming academic year. Specific attention is paid to areas where improvement is needed and strategies are devised to strengthen those areas. Attention is also paid to areas in which achievement is exceptionally high so that programs and methodology can be adjusted to further challenge students in the high achieving range. In concert with the school's Bergen County Special Services teacher, a needs assessment is also developed for students who are currently or should be receiving remedial services. High achieving students are invited to participate in Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth and have enrolled in online courses with faculty mentoring. All of this information helps to develop the school's Instructional Improvement Plan for the coming year. This plan, after review by the principal, is then submitted to the Archdiocesan Schools Office.

Collaborative discussions do not end with the development of the Instructional Improvement Plan. Throughout the year, teachers participate in grade level and subject area meetings to further evaluate and discuss students' classroom performance, share best practices, develop more creative approaches to the requirements of the curriculum, support each other's efforts, and share the fruits of professional development opportunities in which they have participated. These meetings are also used to share the results of other forms of assessments, both formative and summative, such as written and oral tests, formal and informal observations, group or individual student activities which have been evaluated by means of rubrics, and students' self-evaluations. As a result of these meetings, teachers are able to strengthen the coherence of the curriculum not only within grade levels, but also within subject areas as they cross grade levels. Faculty meetings are used to reinforce the strategies developed to address the needs of students in all ranges of accomplishment.

At the beginning of each academic year, teachers are provided with the Terra Nova scores of the students whom they will teach during that year. This allows them to examine individual test scores and note individual strengths and weaknesses. As a result, teachers are also able to tailor their programs not only to the capabilities of the class as a whole, but also to individual needs of students. Awareness of multiple intelligences theory, brain-based theory, and techniques for diversifying instruction are invaluable tools for permitting teachers to respond to assessment results with effective methods of pedagogy. Classified students are accommodated within the classroom and through specialized instruction offered by professional personnel certified in supplemental education. High achieving students are offered a variety of challenging activities within the classroom and in the many extra-curricular and co-curricular activities offered by the school. Challenge contests, such as high school Scholastic Olympics program, the Catholic Challenge, and other sponsored contests offer exciting challenges to these students. They are also encouraged to serve as peer tutors. All students are supported in their efforts to achieve their highest potential and have their interests addressed and their abilities challenged through creative classroom activities enhanced by the use of technology.

Results of standardized testing are communicated to parents through Home Reports, School Advisory Board and Home School Association meetings, thereby, supporting the parents' crucial role in the education of their children. Outstanding student achievement results are shared with the community through press releases in local newspapers and articles in both parish bulletins.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Academy of Our Lady communicates student achievement and teacher successes at joint meetings for area Catholic school faculty. These meetings provide opportunities to describe best practices, provide opportunities to collaborate on instructional methods and plan for future needs. Discussions have covered curriculum mapping, Orton-Gillingham reading, and school safety. Teachers are encouraged to observe best practices in action by visiting other schools. Deanery workshops provide opportunities for faculty to collaborate with peers on grade level as well as subject level to enhance instructional strategies. Annually the school hosts a county-wide forum for Catholic high school and elementary school principals, department chairs, curriculum coordinators, and faculty. This forum is an opportunity to explore relevant topics and exchange ideas. Academy of Our Lady faculty members are effective leaders at the table discussions. This well-received agenda highlights the flow of instruction to insure student success in high school. Academy faculty attends workshops offered by the Newark Archdiocese focused on the Common Core State Standards. These workshops have provided the opportunity for teachers to meet and network with their grade level counterparts throughout the archdiocese.

The principal and faculty have presented workshops at the National Catholic Educational Association Conference on topics such as development and school management. Members of the school faculty served as members of a panel discussing Web 2.0 at the International Society for Technology and Education Conference which draws attendees from the United States and several foreign countries. It is evident that Academy of Our Lady has a strong commitment to reach out not only to the local and diocesan communities, but also to the national and international arenas.

Various members of the faculty have shared their professional expertise as mentors to pre-service teachers and interns from a number of area colleges. Felician College consistently places six to eight students at Academy of Our Lady each spring term for their Freshman Field Experience. Teachers share successful practices, strategies and management tips, moving their expertise forward to the next generation of educators.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

The school proudly shares its success with the community in newspapers, open house tours, websites, brochures and parish bulletins. Community newspapers, the Catholic Advocate, and The Bergen Record have featured stories about school events and activities highlighting the accomplishments of individual students.

Family and community members are invited to participate on many levels and layers in the educational process. Parents are part of the daily life at the school enriching the educational experience as library aides, art docents, and offering hospitality. Various learning activities encourage parental involvement including immigrant reports, International Day, Fire Safety Week, Dental Health Week, career day, science fair and book fair. Parent participation makes the Pre-K holiday shows, Biography Day, and New Jersey Cake Day great successes.

Community members present and engage in student learning throughout the year. Veterans and Holocaust survivors have shared their first hand stories. Career days are planned bi-annually for the junior high students featuring parents who share information about their occupations and professions. Glen Rock Police offer the students drug abuse education. Guest authors, such as Mary Higgins Clark, share their craft with the students.

Service learning activities have broadened the students' exposure to the community. The mayor joined the eighth grade planting a peace garden. Junior high students invited the town to a prayer vigil for the United Nations Day of Peace at a local park. School wide collections of Bear Hugs for the Holidays enhance biography writing skills on attached tags. Apple pie baking for a Thanksgiving dinner for the homeless incorporates math and science skills as well as reflective writing.

Catholic Schools Week, which is observed nationwide during the last week of January each year, provides an excellent opportunity for the school to share its story with the wider community through open houses and tours. The school presents a series of engaging and interesting activities welcoming the community. Students speak at the Sunday Masses sharing their school pride, offering tours and sharing hospitality to all interested in its mission.

The School Advisory Board solicits feedback and input for school improvement through community and faculty surveys. The findings of the surveys foster the development of goals and policies which have improved the educational environment and physical plant. Feedback from family and community members continues to augment student success and school improvements.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Academy of Our Lady's motto, "Building the Kingdom, one child at a time," emphasizes how the school aspires to embrace the uniqueness of every child. The school stresses the education of the whole child in its mission statement and through a challenging instruction.

Religion: At Academy of Our Lady, religion is a way of life, not only an academic subject. Prayer is a vital part of the daily routine. The children are encouraged to live their faith through service to others and community outreach projects. Monthly liturgies and prayer services for the school and community are prepared by the students.

Language Arts: The language arts curriculum is a spiraling program encompassing reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Language arts instruction emphasizes the development of strong communication skills. Students are provided a strong foundation in grammar, spelling skills, and creative expression. From the primary grades students engage in the writing process developing writing portfolios, which follow them as they progress through the grades.

Mathematics: The mathematics curriculum is based upon the Common Core State Standards. Areas of study include numbers and operations, algebraic thinking, geometry, measurement, data analysis, and probability. A hands-on, discovery-based approach is applied throughout the grade levels. In addition to being exposed to traditional algorithms, the children are encouraged to develop and articulate strategies in mastering concepts. Application of concepts and skills to real-life situations is paramount.

Science: The science curriculum encompasses the three strands of physical, life, and earth science. Students are encouraged to formulate questions, conduct research, analyze findings, and draw conclusions from their investigations. Students experience the sciences through hands-on activities, experiments, and field trips.

Social Studies: Families, neighborhoods, and communities are the initial areas of study emphasizing good responsible citizenship. Through its focus on the State of New Jersey, ancient cultures, world and American history, geography and current events the Social Studies curriculum blends the study of people in relation to each other and their world. Primary sources, museum displays of artifacts and resources add to student understanding. Guest speakers serve as primary sources sharing their personal experiences.

Fine Arts: Creative expression is the focus of the visual and performing arts curricula. An appreciation of art history and artists along with the use of various media and tools form the foundation of the fine arts curriculum. Music theory and history are presented in conjunction with cultural background in studying musicians and their impact on our world. Students' talents are developed through liturgical choral groups, instrumental accompaniment, and band instruction.

Physical Education: All students participate in physical education. The curriculum develops athletic skills, improves fitness levels, and teaches the importance of teamwork. Students participate in the Physical Activity and Teenage Health program, Jump Rope for Heart, and Presidential Fitness Program. The

traditional annual field day highlights acquired skills while providing fun. Health instruction covers nutrition, physical, emotional, and social health, personal hygiene, safety, peer pressure, and substance abuse.

Technology: Technology infusion is evident throughout instruction. Multi-media presentations are developed by students based on instruction in computer competency skills including data base management, spreadsheets, multimedia research, and telecommunications. Interactive whiteboards and document cameras enhance instruction and provide virtual learning experiences.

Foreign Language: Academy of Our Lady is in compliance with the National Blue Ribbon program's foreign language requirements. Spanish is introduced in pre-kindergarten. Students in Kindergarten through grade six have Spanish class one period weekly. Seventh and eighth grades expand instruction to three periods per week. Students explore Hispanic and Latino traditions and culture while building their vocabulary, aural-oral skills, and grammar with literature, Rosetta Stone, games, and songs.

2. Reading/English:

Fostering a deep, life-long love of reading is a paramount goal of Academy of Our Lady's reading program and is viewed as an essential tool for success. After careful consideration, the school faculty selected the McGraw-Hill reading series. In the primary grades the reading program utilizes a fusion of phonics, whole language, Orton-Gillingham, and multiple intelligences. Primary grade teachers construct individual and small group lessons for their students. These lessons are designed to help students develop the skills that ensure they'll become competent critical readers. This firm foundation supports a diversity of instruction in the middle and upper grades. The reading program blends individual, small group, and whole class instruction. The curriculum advances to literature-based anthologies exploring a variety of genres. Varied methods including dramatics, book clubs, journals, literature circles, book talks, and presentations by noted authors extend the students' reading skills and interest.

Efforts to improve students' reading skills exist throughout the grades. The Accelerated Reader program not only provides an opportunity for students to read books on an appropriate level as independent reading or as a supplement to the curriculum, but also to explore more challenging literature. The reading specialist facilitates the Peer Assisted Learning Strategy program that matches same grade level students of different abilities for cooperative learning. Students' love of reading is fostered through the Drop Everything and Read and summer reading programs.

Students have access to a large collection of books that represent various genres and levels of complexity. The media specialist assists students in selecting appropriate library books and models expressive reading. Students enjoy practicing their reading skills by reading aloud to Liberty, a reading therapy dog, trained to work with children by Canine Assistance.

The reading specialist works with below performing students providing small group instruction. Orton-Gillingham methods have improved reading skills for primary grades. To improve students in middle school, high interest/low ability books and SRA Reading Laboratory are employed. For above grade level achieving students, there is an increased emphasis on independent reading, materials through the twelfth grade reading level, and an enrichment specific skill series.

Teachers attended workshops addressing special needs at the middle school level. To improve the reading fluency and comprehension, specific guidance in free choice books, oral-aural instruction, and small

group discussion are employed. Instructors blend grade level instruction with remedial work as specified in the student's Individualized Student Plan.

3. Mathematics:

The belief that math is everywhere and that math is relevant, fun, and "do-able" by all is evidenced in innumerable ways throughout Academy of Our Lady. The math curriculum is designed to develop the students' ability to become critical thinkers and problem solvers as they master the grade level concepts. The math faculty peruses the latest educational publications to keep abreast of the most recent developments corresponding to the Common Core State Standards. They keep current on best practices in math education by referencing The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education Coalition and the AIMS Education Foundation websites, as well as through professional journals published by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the Association of Mathematics Teachers of New Jersey, and Mathematics Association of America.

The focus of the standards-based math curriculum is to engage the children in a wide variety of modalities, learning settings, and groupings in which hands-on, discovery-based exploration, active learning, and daily warm-ups enhance understanding. Instruction and activities are conducted in pairs, and flexible grouping to provide students with multiple experiences designed to foster mastery of mathematical skills. The students are provided with innumerable opportunities to find success while being appropriately challenged intellectually. Above average ability students are given the opportunity for advanced levels of math instruction. Specific strategies used to address the needs of low achieving students include extra time with the Math Empowerment Teacher and in class support.

Students are encouraged to think "outside of the box," allowing them to discover and to decode patterns of math determining what works best. The development of the students' problem-solving and critical thinking skills is imperative not only in their future education and workplaces but also in daily real-world applications. They are engaged by a myriad of mathematical manipulatives, centers, games, materials and tools. The emphasis on hands-on experience assists the development of a deeper understanding of mathematical principles and concepts. The use of manipulatives, such as geoboards, fraction tiles, algebra tiles, connecting cubes, and three-dimensional solids, increases student engagement.

Service learning is incorporated with the Saint Jude's Math-a-thon where students raised \$10,000 performing computation and problem solving. Reteaching of skills and the reinforcement of concepts are developed with the math programs IXL and Education City. Throughout the school the belief that all children can and will succeed in math permeates.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Academy of Our Lady science curriculum embraces the application of essential scientific skills to everyday life situations from kindergarten through eighth grade. The students acquire scientific knowledge through hands-on activities, experiments, and field trips as well as textbooks and website based lessons. They explore the curricula strands of life, physical, and earth science through age appropriate projects using critical thinking and problem solving methods.

Science instruction is technology infused using interactive whiteboards, document cameras, digital scales and digital microscopes. The school has two fully equipped science laboratories, science equipment in each classroom, and science centers in the primary classrooms. The scientific method is followed from the youngest grades and is highlighted in an annual Science Fair for seventh and eighth grade students. Younger students also display their projects at this time. The junior high students learn to write a science research paper incorporating the skills learned in language arts class utilizing the Modern Language Association's format.

The methodology of inquiry-based instruction following Bloom's Taxonomy allows each student to grow to his/her fullest potential, and follows the school's mission statement. Classroom and field trip experiences are designed to help the students later on in their chosen vocations. Annually, the middle grades plant and maintain a vegetable garden on the school's property. These harvested crops are then donated to the Center for Food Action. The fifth and sixth grades visit the Buehler Science Center where students have assigned roles and "command" an entire space voyage. Applying Newton's Laws of Motion the Disney Imagineering program enhances physics applications to the real world. Additional interactive programs allow students to perform virtual dissections, visit biomes, and observe human body systems. Hourly weather data are available through WeatherBug, a live feed, and always promotes student discussions. Ecology projects and recycling take place throughout the school. Students monitor and assist with specific refuse bins in each classroom for paper and plastic. Varied celebrations highlight stewardship in practice through projects and prayer including Earth Science Week and Earth Day when prayer partners led by the Student Council clean up the campus. Academy of Our Lady students develop scientific skills and attitudes that enable them to become ecologically responsible citizens in their community and the world.

5. Instructional Methods:

Academy of Our Lady's school mission statement recognizes the diversity of students spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially. Teachers support this statement and therefore differentiate instruction to meet the various needs of all students. Formative and summative assessments identify students' needs. Carefully planned learning centers give students of different ability levels challenging tasks to meet their needs. Teachers design lessons incorporating Gardner's multiple intelligences with activities for visual, auditory, logical, linguistic and kinesthetic learners.

Instruction is supplemented and modified to ensure high levels of student learning and achievement. An emphasis is placed on group activities that foster communication and collaboration skills necessary for success in the 21st century. Teachers use Bloom's Taxonomy to develop assignments. Activities, such as Biography Day, publishing parties, family folklore, immigrant presentations, and International Day, encourage application of curriculum to real world settings. Critical thinking skills are fostered and developed in class discussions and reflections. Peer assistance provides high achievers with an opportunity for leadership while assisting their peers. Methods to challenge high achieving students include participating in competitions and contests. These team building experiences engage the students in collaboration, communication and the opportunity to select areas of concentration which energizes the classroom.

Lessons based on the understanding by design model incorporate technological tools. Interactive methods highlight use of whiteboards and document cameras to enhance presentation of material. Various digital resources and online programs such as Accelerated Reader, Rosetta Stone, IXL and Enchanted Learning are used to support the instructional programs. Interdisciplinary projects develop proficient skill level and instruct students in Power Point, Excel, and Publisher in Microsoft Office. Virtual tours, Skype, and participation in weekly Newsbowl bring the outside world into the classroom. Student presentations are videotaped, edited and made into movies. Academy of Our Lady utilizes multi-faceted methods and resources to support student learning and achievement.

6. Professional Development:

Professional development is an on-going process that is integral to strengthening and improving student achievement at Academy of Our Lady. Teachers are provided with a variety of opportunities to increase their professional knowledge and improve their pedagogical skills. These opportunities include:

workshops provided by the Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Newark, local professional development days planned with other area schools, faculty meetings, webinars, and collaborative subject area meetings. Teachers are encouraged to attend outside workshops and conferences that explore current trends in education and to pursue advanced academic degrees. Specific conventions, such as International Society for Technology in Education and National Catholic Education Association, are attended annually. Attendees share with other faculty new insights, products, and experiences. Each teacher maintains and submits a Professional Development Plan based on personal instructional improvement goals. This is reviewed and discussed with the principal. A professional section is maintained in the library and periodicals are available in the faculty room. Professional learning communities within the faculty provide opportunities for discussion, growth, and inspiration. To enhance school improvement the school principal participates in workshops sponsored by the Archdiocesan Schools Office.

Faculty members participate in school-sponsored in-service training, such as learning to integrate specific technology for use in curriculum mapping. An in-depth series of workshops implementing 21st Century Skills in Learner Active Technology Infused Classrooms was held last year. A cohort was developed to lead peers with methods and practical applications of technology in the classroom. This was followed up with in class support and conferences with the presenter. Seminars and grants for professional development are pursued such as Picturing America which blended art, social studies, and music. Embracing the Common Core Curriculum Standards across the subject areas directly impact student achievement with 21st century skills. Students are challenged to become leaders and lifelong learners.

A data-driven instructional improvement plan is developed based on collaboration, evaluation, assessments, and dialog. Using data analysis from standardized testing, small professional learning communities examine effectiveness and determine the best plan to support student achievement. The results are shared and discussed school wide. The entire faculty then develops a comprehensive plan for school improvement to be implemented and monitored throughout the academic year.

7. School Leadership:

Academy of Our Lady is co-sponsored by the parishes of St. Catharine, Glen Rock and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Ridgewood. The ultimate leadership of the school rests with the pastors, supported by the School Advisory Board. The daily direction of the school is delegated to the principal, who, in consultation with the assistant principal pastors, the Advisory Board, and the faculty, determines the policies, direction, and long range goals of the school.

The principal and assistant principal collaboratively work with the faculty, pastors, and parents to create a welcoming and inviting learning environment. The administration works with the staff to ensure that the Academy is a place of academic excellence where faith is nurtured in students, faculty, and parents, and demonstrated through caring service to the wider community. The school fulfills those criteria because of the passionate commitment of the administration to educational progress and service learning. The principal is committed to maintaining an environment where each child is treated as an individual and has access to programs, activities, and services tailored to individual needs. The principal monitors implementation of the instructional improvement plans through observations, lesson plan evaluations, and review of student work.

The atmosphere of close community permeates the school environment. This speaks to a philosophy of leadership that fosters shared values, a clearly defined vision, and a collaborative approach in all areas of school life. The principal promotes daily recitation of a school pledge to prevent intimidation, harassment, and bullying. Teachers and parents are invited into decision-making processes, and where appropriate,

students also enter into discussions regarding goals and activities. Alumni and students often describe Academy of Our Lady as their home away from home.

The principal also works closely with the School Advisory Board and the Marketing Committee to plan for the future of the school. A visionary and collaborative approach has helped to create a school shaped by the most current best practices of educational pedagogy, the infusion of technology throughout the curriculum, and a global vision that keeps students aware of the wider world in which they live. The pastors meet regularly with the administration to review fiscal planning, academics and projects. The principal was recognized by the Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Newark as an administrator who "provides excellent leadership, direction, and support" to teachers, students, parents and faculty and was named "Principal of the Year" in 2007.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

- 1. Private school association: Catholic
- 2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt $(501(c)(3) \text{ status? } \underline{\text{Yes}}$
- 3. What are the 2012-2013 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
\$5093	\$5093	\$5093	\$5093	\$5093	\$5093
6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th
\$5093	\$5093	\$5093	\$0	\$0	\$0
12th	Other				
\$0	\$				

- 4. What is the educational cost per student? (School budget divided by enrollment) \$6473
- 5. What is the average financial aid per student? \$1082
- 6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? $\underline{9\%}$
- 7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 79%

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd edition/2008 Publisher: CTB/McGraw Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	78	83	81	77	75
Number of students tested	28	34	29	39	37
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd edition/2008 Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	76	85	81	80	71
Number of students tested	28	34	29	39	37
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	c Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 4 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd edition/2008 Publisher: CTB/McGraw Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	73	75	59	58	85
Number of students tested	34	32	42	33	35
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Reading Grade: 4 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd edition/2008 Publisher: CTB/McGraw Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	80	74	73	68	82
Number of students tested	34	32	42	33	35
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	c Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd edition/2008 Publisher: CTB/Mc Graw Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	82	77	74	80	78
Number of students tested	34	40	40	35	39
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	c Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd edition/2008 Publisher: CTB/McGraw Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	75	76	69	85	88
Number of students tested	33	40	40	35	39
Percent of total students tested	97	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	c Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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administered in March 2008.

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 6 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd edition/2008 Publisher: CTB/Mc Graw Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	81	64	82	77	83
Number of students tested	40	42	39	42	39
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Reading Grade: 6 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd edition/2008 Publisher: CTB/Mc Graw Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	82	76	81	86	84
Number of students tested	40	42	39	42	39
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 7 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd edition/2008 Publisher: CTB/McGraw Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	77	89	83	87	81
Number of students tested	47	46	45	38	38
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	Disadvantaged St	udents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score	61				
Number of students tested	10				
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Reading Grade: 7 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd edition/2008 Publisher: CTB/MC Graw Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	77	84	86	86	85
Number of students tested	47	46	45	38	38
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic	c Disadvantaged St	tudents			
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score	65				
Number of students tested	10				
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					